

# WVU biometrics research aiding American soldiers

By Gary A. Harki  
Correspondent

When American soldiers stationed in Iraq and elsewhere track enemy combatants, it's a good bet that they are using technology first developed at West Virginia University, according to researchers.

WVU research in biometrics human identification has been incorporated into U.S. Department of Defense technology used for tracking and establishing the identity of foreign fighters and terrorists, said Bohan Cukic, co-director of the Center for Identification Technology Research.

The technology was developed as part of CITEr, a National Science Foundation biometrics research center that incorporates several universities, private companies and various government agencies.

The five-year-old program is

part of the larger biometrics program at WVU, said Larue Williams, program coordinator for the Biometric Knowledge Center.

According to Williams, the University has the only biometrics human identification program in the country.

"We certainly don't have a problem with demand for graduates," Williams said. "Many work for front-running government agencies, and we are integrated into industry as well."

CITEr research at WVU and other universities is funded through government and private industry sponsors. Those member agencies direct what CITEr researches, Cukic said.

Research at WVU has been focused on using fingerprint, iris and facial recognition to identify people, Cukic said.

"If you have all three of these, the question is how do you use

them together," he said.

Often someone may leave behind part of a fingerprint and fuzzy images on a surveillance camera. The research focuses on using these partial identifications to make a more accurate identification, Cukic said.

Results from this research have been incorporated into the Department of Defense Automatic Biometric Identification System, he said.

"If you have one good identifier and the others are blurred images and low quality information, you try to do the best you can to identify them based on the information you have," Cukic said.

The research is also being used at airports and borders, he said.

Williams said WVU is one of the lead institutions for such research.

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## Biometrics

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"There is a lot of emphasis on this right now, on all fronts," she said.

WVU biometrics students can benefit from the research by attending conferences, workshops and meet people in the industry, Williams said.

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